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New York

President:	Mr. Aboulatta	(Egypt)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Solíz
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Italy	Mr. Lambertini
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Sweden	Ms. Schoulgin-Nyoni
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of South Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. El-Ghassim Wane, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations; Mr. Nicholas Haysom,Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan; and His Excellency Mr. Festus Mogae, Chair of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, to participate in this meeting.

Mr. Haysom is participating in today's meeting via video-teleconference from Addis Ababa. Mr. Mogae is participating via video-teleconference from Juba.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Wane.

Mr. Wane: I am grateful forthis opportunity to brief the Security Council on the Secretary-General's 30-day report and on the overall situation in South Sudan.

The deployment of the Regional Protection Force (RPF) is under way and, since the submission of the report a week ago, there have been no significant updates on the deployment process. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) continues to engage the Government on a regular basis in order to expedite the deployment. Enhanced cooperation with the Government will be critical for the RPF to complete the process and fully implement its mandate.

As has been reported, some misunderstandings arose with the Government surrounding the accommodation of the advance party of the Rwandan contingent of the RPF to Juba. I am pleased to confirm that, following the active engagement of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. David Shearer, and his team with Government officials over the past two weeks, those misunderstandings have been cleared.

In commemoration of the second anniversary of the signing, on 25 August 2015, of the South Sudan Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, the Chair of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, former President Mr. Festus Mogae, declared yesterday that little meaningful progress had been achieved in its implementation. President Mogae will shortly explain the challenges he faces and his efforts to revitalize the process, which Special Envoy Haysom actively supports. Let me say that the Secretariat could not agree more with his assessment and the calls on the Security Council to express itself strongly, unanimously and unreservedly in support of his efforts and those of the region as a whole, including the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)-led Revitalization Forum. More than ever before, there is a need for continued and close coordination among IGAD, the African Union, the United Nations and the broader international community to ensure that we leverage our collective influence to bring an end to the suffering of the civilian population and help put South Sudan on a more positive trajectory.

The security situation in the country is a cause for serious concern, as it has been over the past few years. Unfortunately, the expected ceasefire remains elusive, as military operations continued during the reporting period, mostly in the Upper Nile part of the country. While efforts by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to take Pagak, the de facto headquarters of the Sudan People's Liberation Army-In Opposition (SPLA-IO), initially succeeded, fighting around Pagak and along the corridor to Majang continues, while civilians in the area remain displaced, including refugees heading to Ethiopia. Further north, clashes resumed between the SPLA and the SPLA-IO in Kaka, on the west bank of the Nile. Insecurity also continued in the Equatorias, including long main roads. UNMISS has enhanced its presence in Torit and continues intensive patrolling to and around Yei in response to persistent threats to civilians.

Those incidents directly affect humanitarian operations, which consequently have an impact on the most vulnerable of the population in dire need of assistance. In the month of July, 136 access incidents were reported by the humanitarian community. That is the highest number recorded in any one month since December 2013. Of those 136 incidents, 49 involved violence against personnel and assets, once again

illustrating the increasingly dangerous and risky environment in which humanitarian actors operate. In a persistent trend, letters threatening violence against aid workers from different ethnicities have also continued. Incidents of looting also spiked during the month of July, with 15 incidents reported across the country. Of particular concern were the six major looting incidents of warehouses and trucks in transit, leading to the loss of 670 metric tons of food meant for vulnerable communities in Eastern Equatoria, Lakes, Upper Nile and Wau. Humanitarian actors were also denied access, both by Government and non-State armed actors, to several critical areas.

The Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Lacroix, visited South Sudan from 1 to 3 August. During his visit, he met with President Salva Kiir and key Government officials. He reiterated to all his interlocutors that there was no military solution to the conflict in South Sudan and that inclusive and credible political processes were the only way forward. Although President Kiir and his Cabinet members expressed reservation about the inclusion of some people in the dialogue process, in particular Riek Machar, there was an acknowledgment that sizable communities cannot be left out of the process just because they were led by, or supported, a particular individual.

Political attention in Juba appeared squarely focused on the national dialogue process and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement reunification, on which Special Envoy Haysom will report. While the national dialogue has made some progress, achieving key enablers for a credible process, such as inclusivity and a free and secure environment, remain a challenge. Following the national dialogue secretariat's request for technical assistance, UNMISS has been coordinating with other United Nations entities and institutional partners to assist with needs and the support required. In that regard, support was provided to a steering committee inception seminar, during which participants acknowledged a better understanding of the challenges associated with ensuring inclusivity, confidence-building and the actual implementation of the process in the prevailing environment. However, the national dialogue continued to be criticized for its lack of inclusivity.

The national dialogue steering committee's outreach to key opposition figures outside the country, including Mr. Machar, Thomas Cirilo and Lam Akol, yielded little, as those actors either refused to receive visiting national dialogue delegations or objected to the viability of a national dialogue as a vehicle for achieving an inclusive political settlement. We have been informed that their opposition is not directed against the need for such a nation-building exercise, but against the conduct of the dialogue in advance of, or as an alternative to, an inclusive peace process. On the other hand, the participation of some civil society and faith-based groups, both in the steering committee proceedings and in the seminar I mentioned, is a positive development.

Meanwhile, some progress can be reported in the negotiations related to the establishment of the hybrid court for South Sudan. Two weeks ago, the Government of South Sudan and the African Union Commission agreed, at the technical level, on the text of the legal instruments for the establishment of the court. They will now submit the legal instruments to the Ministers of Justice and to the senior management of the African Union Commission for their consideration and approval. The United Nations Office of Legal Affairs continues to support that process.

The national dialogue could make a significant contribution to improving the political environment through an open discussion of critical national issues. Participants and observers attest to open debate even within the steering committee. However, it cannot be a substitute for a negotiated peace agreement, which, if implemented in good faith, can silence the guns, end the conflict and enhance the potential for the national dialogue to play a part in consolidating long-term sustainable peace and ensuring true ownership by all South Sudanese stakeholders.

As has been repeated many times here in the Chamber, the conflict in South Sudan is a man-made one for which the leaders of the country bear a direct responsibility. The dire economic situation and continued conflict there have combined to generate a dangerous and precarious situation for its citizens, but the same leaders can also bring the country back from the brink of the abyss. All that is needed is genuine political will to halt military operations, peaceably negotiate and make the compromises necessary to achieve sustainable peace in the country. I would also urge the Security Council to pronounce itself in that regard. It is critical that the leaders and all other stakeholders in South Sudan hear the international

community's unified demand of what is expected of them in the interests of their own people.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Wane for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Haysom.

Mr. Haysom: I thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in South Sudan. My remarks will build upon the briefing provided by Assistant Secretary-General Wane and will cover the developments relating to a resumption of the political process in South Sudan.

Since my previous briefing (see S/PV.7982), two months ago, the five internal and regional initiatives to address the crisis in one form or another indicate continuing concern about the trajectory and depth of the conflict, without any of them thus far presenting a definite breakthrough in the political impasse. However, I remain hopeful that some, or a combination of them, may have the potential to positively impact the situation.

As we just heard from Assistant Secretary-General Wane, there is sporadic fighting and widespread insecurity across the country. Our engagements with South Sudanese interlocutors, including the opposition, suggest that battlefield fortunes continue to inform the calculus of both the Government and its opponents. Alongside its military pacification efforts, the Government has created an appearance of reconciliation efforts, including through the limited release of political prisoners. The Government has further linked those efforts to the national dialogue initiative and to laying the groundwork for calls on political actors to prepare for elections in 2018. For our part, we have made clear to all external and internal stakeholders our view that the prevailing insecurity, internal and external population displacement and lack of appropriate institutions, or a reasonably level political playing field, in an increasingly divided ethnic environment, militate against organizing credible elections within the year. Indeed, it may well contribute to deepening and extending the conflict.

Assistant Secretary-General Wane dealt with some of the challenges facing the national dialogue and its potential contribution to long-term sustainable peace. I would simply draw attention, in the context of current regional initiatives, to the possibility of the national dialogue initiative being played off against other initiatives directly related to securing an immediate cessation of hostilities.

Among the regional efforts, the Ugandan initiative has focused on the reunification of certain factions of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). In late July, that initiative led to President Kiir, Ms. Rebecca Garang, of the former detainees group, and First Vice-President Taban Deng committing to expediting the implementation of the Agreement on the Reunification of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, known as the Arusha Agreement, of January 2015. The Agreement concerned a resolution of SPLM intra-party problems. With the continued absence of the SPLM in Opposition, led by Riek Machar, and some among the former detainees group reluctant to reconcile with President Kiir in such a manner, the Ugandan initiative continues to falls short of achieving its goal. It may even be divisive both among and between opposition groups. President Museveni has also begun to engage groups outside the SPLM core, by, inter alia, encouraging preparations for elections.

Another regional initiative — the meeting of opposition parties, which was to be hosted in Kenya by President Kenyatta — has not gained much traction. With the Kenyan Government focused on the outcome of recent elections and the former detainees, who were a driving force behind the initiative, preoccupied with their Kampala discussions, the initiative appears to be stalled. The apparent advantage to any peace process of dealing with a coherent opposition and the increaising competition and conflicts between opposition groupings have led stakeholders to explore alternatives. A meeting between opposition parties, possibly outside Kenya, could be reinstated as part of preparations for the Revitalization Forum of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

The decision of the IGAD Summit of Heads of State and Government of 12 June to convene a high-level Revitalization Forum in respect to the 2015 IGAD-sponsored peace Agreement has begun to gain some momentum. It aims to include Government and opposition groups in a dialogue to consider how to implement the peace Agreement, and IGAD has appointed Ambassador Ismail Wais as its Special Envoy to follow through on its decisions. Recognizing the importance of securing President Kiir's buy-in, IGAD's Council of Foreign Ministers met on 24 and 25 July in Juba. Following that, IGAD, with help from the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC), the

United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and my Office, carried out a mapping exercise on the relevant opposition actors to be included in the Revitalization Forum.

In mid-August, I attended an IGAD-hosted meeting in Ethiopia of independent South Sudanese experts. The discussions were frank and generated a number of recommendations for IGAD, including on which opposition parties to engage and on how the peace Agreement could be adjusted to reflect the new realities in South Sudan. While the IGAD initiative continues to have potential, a main concern, which I have conveyed to IGAD, is its cautious preparation for engagement with opposition actors. Although those engagements are delicate, the danger is that the more the initiative consults with IGAD capitals, including Juba, the more suspicious the opposition will become that its agenda is partisan.

Crucially and irrespective of his declared commitment made to the IGAD Council of Ministers during their Juba visit to implement the IGAD summit decisions, President Kiir continues to prioritize the national dialogue and the reunification of the SPLM, which he recently stressed would bring about peace, with the revitalization process playing only a supplementary role. As IGAD grapples with those challenges, it has already warned that the indicative timeline for holding the Revitalization Forum at the end of September will necessarily slip.

Meanwhile, with regard to the African Union's (AU) engagement, the AU Chairperson, President Alpha Oumar Konaré, is awaiting the internal adoption of a broad AU engagement strategy on South Sudan before taking further measures. Previously, President Konaré emphasized speaking with one voice, the primacy of internal support for any solutions to the conflict and a full and robust presence of the Regional Protection Force. President Konaré will visit Addis Ababa this week, thereby providing my Office an opportunity to engage and take stock of the current tracks of engagement and the respective steps to be taken by the AU, IGAD and the United Nations. We will be concerned about establishing mutual complementarity between IGAD and AU initiatives. That will be crucial as we enter a period of more intensive public engagement by the Security Council, the AU Peace and Security Council and forums on the margins of the General Assembly, respectively.

Given the motives and underlying logic that drive the national dialogue, the SPLM reunification process, IGAD's peace Agreement Revitalization Forum and even the AU plan of action, it would, at first instance, appear to suggest that those initiatives might clash or undermine one another. On the other hand, they could harness potential complementarity, and such an outcome would require a clear commitment to an inclusive and credible peace process.

We have underlined to the IGAD secretariat the importance of distinguishing the particular goals of each initiative and encouraged it to focus on how they can work to the greater good. The Revitalization Forum, the national dialogue and the other initiatives should neither adopt the agenda of the others, nor overload the agendas of competing initiatives with their own goals. Therefore, in the quest for a more coherent approach, my Office will continue to work closely with IGAD, the JMEC, the AU and UNMISS to support initiatives towards sustainable peace. I will also continue to engage South Sudanese stakeholders to open lines to all sides of the conflict.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Haysom for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Mogae.

Mr. Mogae: I would like to thank the President of the Security Council, His Excellency Mr. Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta, for his kind invitation to me to brief the Security Council today.

This morning, in Juba, I chaired the monthly plenary meeting of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC). I therefore come to the Council via videolink from the base of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Before I begin, I would like to deal with a housekeeping matter by noting that as I shall be issuing the pending JMEC quarterly report by the end of this month, as mandated under Chapter VII of the peace Agreement. I trust that it will reach all Council members in good time.

Members will recall that in my briefing to the Security Council last month, I described the "one voice" initiative and the process by which the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) mandated the convening of a high-level Revitalization forum for the peace Agreement in South Sudan (see S/PV.8008). I was very grateful for the unanimous support of the members of the Security Council for the

IGAD initiative. The Council's support and endorsement sends a strong message to all South Sudanese leaders that the world is watching and has high expectations for a rapid and sustained improvement in the overall situation in South Sudan.

The second anniversary of the signing of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan passed relatively unnoticed last week. Our perception at the time of the signing of the peace Agreement, in August 2015, was that it had ended a tragic internal conflict that had threatened to cast Africa's youngest nation apart, and it was hoped that disagreements among the parties over substantive issues had been resolved.

The peace Agreement brought JMEC into being, and we believed that our task would be simply to oversee and guide its implementation by the Transitional Government of National Unity. By now, the peace Agreement should have achieved considerable progress towards improved security and governance in the country. From day one, however, we have had to persuade the parties to implement each and every task. Disagreements between the key principals and the lack of any appetite for compromise slowed progress to a standstill and led to growing tensions in Juba that ultimately resulted in the violence of July 2016 and its continuing repercussions. Two years on since the signing of the peace Agreement there has been little meaningful progress in its implementation.

Since July 2016, we, as JMEC, have remained profoundly shocked by the rampant hostilities across the country and the rapid deterioration of the political, security, humanitarian and economic situation in South Sudan. As a result, we are now rightly absorbed in a process to restore and revitalize the prominence of the peace Agreement.

In the past month, the security situation in the former Upper Nile state has worsened, due to the recent offensive operations by forces of the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Government against the Machar faction of the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition in Manyiang and Pagak. In today's JMEC plenary, I condemned all the violence that occurred in and around Pagak over the past month and urged that military operations cease immediately. I also urged all parties involved to facilitate access for the Cease Fire and Transitional Security Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM) to investigate and report on the situation in Pagak.

In this month in which we marked World Humanitarian Day, tens of thousands of people in Upper Nile have been forced to flee their homes, and humanitarian aid workers have had no choice but to relocate from the area and suspend delivery of support to those in need. The cycle of violence, displacement and deprivation of humanitarian support has been repeated around the country over the past year and has led to untold misery among those who seek only to live peacefully and provide for their families.

Over the past week, there has been some unfortunate confusion and dispute over the deployment of advanced elements of the Regional Protection Force. One impact of this dispute was the temporary grounding of all United Nations flights, which had a direct impact on the operations of CTSAMM. This is deeply regrettable, and I urge the Transitional Government of National Unity to resolve issues with UNMISS swiftly and facilitate the deployment of the Force without further hindrance, in accordance with resolution 2304 (2016).

To that end, I have further urged IGAD to convene a meeting between the Transitional Government of National Unity, UNMISS and the Chiefs of Defence Forces of the troop-contributing countries, as specified in the IGAD communiqué of 12 June 2017. That meeting has not yet taken place and, as a result, key issues affecting the practical deployment of the Force have not been addressed, and serious challenges are arising.

The IGAD Council of Ministers met on 24 July for the first time in Juba. In its communiqué that day, the Council of Ministers empowered the IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan to coordinate the revitalization process, including all stakeholders and the institutions charged with the responsibility for the implementation of the peace Agreement. The Council also urged all South Sudanese stakeholders to embrace the objectives of the High-level Revitalization Forum and collaborate with the IGAD Special Envoy to achieve a positive outcome. It is essential to stress a number of issues regarding the Revitalization Forum in order to ensure full understanding. The Revitalization Forum is an IGAD initiative, mandated by the Summit of Heads of State and Government and executed by the Council of Ministers through the office of the new IGAD Special Envoy. Our role as the JMEC is to support IGAD in its efforts to convene the Forum.

While the Forum was set up to fulfil three objectives — first, to reinstate the permanent ceasefire; secondly, to reinstate the full and inclusive implementation of the peace Agreement; and, thirdly, to develop revised and realistic timelines for implementation with a view to elections and the end of the transition period — the outcomes of the Forum are not predetermined. It is for the parties and estranged groups to determine and commit to the outcomes of the Forum. After all, in the end the responsibility for the implementation of the peace Agreement lies squarely with those parties. This is a Forum through which we can explore options that can restore the prominence of the peace process, while taking current realities into account. It is our hope that this revitalization process will be pursued in the spirit of peace, inclusiveness and compromise.

In the JMEC's perspective, for the revitalization process to succeed, there is a need for demonstrable political will by the parties and estranged groups to be inclusive and to accommodate one another politically, rather than defeat each other militarily.

We must speak with one voice to the leaders of South Sudan and align our actions. There should be clear consequences for intransigent groups, spoilers and violators. The parties must commit to adhering to any revised timelines and implementation schedules, and adequate funding for the implementation of the revitalized peace Agreement must be determined and secured.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Mogae for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, allow me to thank Mr. Wane and Mr. Haysom and His Excellency Mr. Mogae for their briefings today.

I will be very concise because, regrettably, the situation in South Sudan has hardly changed since the Security Council addressed the issue one month ago (see S/PV.8008), which is why Uruguay reiterates its deep concern and alarm over the crisis in the country, whose political leaders are primarily responsible for the current situation. We are particularly concerned, as mentioned in the statements made by our three briefers, about the continuing impact of the situation on the civilian population — hampered humanitarian access, the looting of food reserves — because what is most important is protecting civilians. We therefore urge all parties and armed groups to immediately cease hostilities throughout the territory and to commit now in good faith to dialogue that will enable the revitalization of the August 2015 Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.

Faced with this difficult scenario, I would like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission to relaunch a credible political process. We welcome IGAD's decision to convene a high-level forum in the near future to revitalize the peace Agreement. That will be a good opportunity for the United Nations, the African Union and IGAD to demonstrate their joint work and express an unequivocal message regarding the restoration of the permanent ceasefire, the full implementation of the peace Agreement and the holding of democratic elections at the end of the transition period.

With regard to the Regional Protection Force, we note the extremely slow progress towards its complete deployment. We reiterate our urging of the Government of South Sudan to fully cooperate with the implementation of resolution 2327 (2016), to cease restricting the activities of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and to allow forthwith the full functionality of the Regional Protection Force.

I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate our appreciation for the courage and dedication of UNMISS staff and of humanitarian actors, who continue to protect and assist millions of people who are victims of a humanitarian catastrophe in an extremely hazardous operational environment.

Mr. Bessho (Japan): I would like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Wane, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Haysom, and the Chair of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC), President Mogae, for their informative briefings.

Japan is deeply concerned about the continued clashes, especially in Upper Nile, despite the unilateral ceasefire declared by President Kiir. Large numbers of people and humanitarian actors have fled due to the Government forces' advance towards Pagak. The Government of South Sudan must be fully aware that the number of displaced people is increasing at a faster rate

in South Sudan than anywhere in the world, with one in three citizens being either a refugee or an internally displaced person. Children under 18, who represent the country's future, account for approximately two thirds of those refugees.

Japan is concerned that the number of humanitarian access incidents in July, which included violence against personnel and assets, were the highest since the crisis began in December 2013. All parties must take prompt and effective action. At the joint meeting in July of the JMEC Humanitarian Working Committee and the Humanitarian High-Level Oversight Committee (HHLOC), it was agreed that the HHLOC would meet quarterly and the Humanitarian Coordination Forum (HCF) would meet monthly. We urge the Government to take steps to ensure that the HHLOC and HCF continue to meet regularly, and that their decisions are faithfully implemented.

We welcome progress in the deployment of the Regional Protection Force (RPF) vanguard units. We thank all troop-contributing countries for their efforts, and appreciate Kenya's agreement to deploy troops to the RPF. Nevertheless, it is regrettable that violations of the status of gorces agreement ccurred this month with regard to flight clearances for personnel of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). In a meeting this week with the diplomatic corps in Juba, the Government again announced a policy of cooperation on UNMISS activities, including the deployment of the RPF. Concrete action must follow. We strongly urge the Government's full cooperation with UNMISS, including on the completion of the RPF's deployment and its effective operation, as stipulated in the unanimously adopted resolution 2327 (2016).

We welcome the progress in the various political processes under way, including efforts by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to resolve the violence and revitalize the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, the national dialogue process and the reintegration process of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement. Constructive and continuous engagement by all key parties in those processes is the only way to ensure peace in South Sudan. The Council should provide full support to IGAD Heads of State, the African Union (AU) Commission Chairperson and AU High Representative, the Secretary-General and the JMEC Chair in order to ensure success.

To advance those processes with synergy and complementarity, genuine inclusiveness and transparency are key. In that regard, we welcome the news of the recent release of political prisoners by the Government. We urge continued steps to create an environment conducive to the advancement of an inclusive political process. Such steps include the Government's full observance of the unilateral ceasefire, the release of any remaining political prisoners, the establishment of the hybrid court and improved media freedom. A ceasefire and constructive participation in the political process by the opposition groups are also important.

The Council must be united in ensuring that all parties are actively engaged in an inclusive political process to achieve lasting peace in South Sudan.

Mr. Llorentty Soliz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Bolivia thanks the Egyptian presidency for convening this meeting. We also thank Assistant Secretary-General Wane and Special Envoy of the Secretary-General Haysom for their briefings. We particularly welcome the Chair of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission for the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, His Excellency Mr. Festus Mogae. Bolivia reiterates its support for, and recognition of, the important work he is doing.

South Sudan continues to face a grave economic, political, security and humanitarian crisis with serious consequences that can be felt both domestically as well as in neighbouring countries. It is alarming that there are 1 million South Sudanese refugees in Uganda. As we stated previously, an immediate cessation of hostilities between the parties is a crucial step towards achieving peace.

Bolivia believes strongly that the conflict in South Sudan should be resolved through an inclusive political process. Dialogue, understanding, reconciliation and compliance with the 2015 Agreement are the way forward. In that regard, we must highlight, and above all support, the work being done by the main regional actors to that end.

The efforts of the international community, in particular such regional actors as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union, may provide fresh impetus to, and lead to the resumption of, the political process. In that connection, we welcome the communiqué on the situation in South

Sudan issued by the fifty-eighth extraordinary session of the IGAD Council of Ministers, which provides a clear message and guidelines for the action the Council should support in an united manner. IGAD initiatives, in coordination with the African Union and the United Nations, are the most appropriate alternative to achieve stable peace in South Sudan. In addition, the high-level Revitalization Forum is an invaluable opportunity for that country to emerge from the political crisis in which it finds itself. However, for that to work, the commitment of the authorities and opposition groups must be genuine. We highlight the efforts of His Excellency Mr. Yoweri Museveni to bring together different factions of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, as well as the role of Chair Mogae in the mediation and revitalization of the political process, which is of crucial importance.

With regard to the current state of the Regional Protection Force (RPF), the deployment of vanguard units is a very important development that we should like to highlight. We welcome the progress and encourage the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the Government to continue to work together to facilitate the deployment of the remaining troops. We followed the recent visit of Mr. Lacroix to South Sudan, and we highlight the commitment of the Secretariat to undertake all possible efforts to accelerate the deployment of the Regional Protection Force with 4,000 troops. The presence of the RPF could make it possible for UNMISS to extend its presence to other areas of conflict, provide humanitarian assistance and improve the security situation in rural areas — something that is tied to agricultural development, which is very important to increasing agricultural production, which in turn is necessary to combat the hunger situation, contribute to economic growth and improve the quality of life of the South Sudanese in those areas.

Moreover, Bolivia takes note of the release of political prisoners after the announcement of an amnesty in May. We believe that is a step in the right direction that will strengthen the national dialogue.

Finally, as we have stated on previous occasions, all the efforts of the international community will mean nothing if the Government and the opposition do not enter into a serious and constructive commitment to resolve the conflict, and therefore achieve a stable and lasting peace.

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): We thank Assistant Secretary-General Wane, Special Envoy Haysom and His Excellency Mr. Mogae for their comprehensive and insightful briefings. I also commend them for their commitment to bring peace to South Sudan under difficult circumstances. My delegation would like to make the following observations and recommendations.

We welcome the arrival of the vanguard units of the Regional Protection Force (RPF), especially the engineering, technical and high-readiness company of the Bangladeshi and Nepalese contingents. We look forward to having the deployment of Rwandan, Ethiopian and Kenyan personnel completed so as to make the RPF fully operational. More efforts, such as the Pakistan level-2 hospital and the deployment of unarmed aerial systems, should be supported and encouraged. The Government should speedily allocate personnel and coordinate the proposed one-stop shop to resolve impediments to the operations of the patrols of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) so that they can have greater freedom of movement. Every proactive measure should be taken to ensure that UNMISS staff do not face arbitrary arrest or detention. We hope that the joint meeting of chiefs of defence forces of the troop contributing-countries, the transitional Government and the United Nations will help resolve all remaining issues.

We are gravely concerned that the continuing Sudan People's Liberation Army military operations in the Equatorias and Greater Upper Nile have led to a sharp escalation in the number of humanitarian incidents and violence against UNMISS and humanitarian personnel. That violence has also led to an increase in the number of internally displaced persons (IDP), most of whom are women and children. Those hostile actions undermine the efforts of the Transitional Government and the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission to facilitate the peace process, and lead to further deterioration in the humanitarian and security conditions. We therefore urge all parties to restore a permanent ceasefire and to stop attacks on humanitarian workers so that access to famine-affected locations is not adversely affected. We also encourage the Special Envoy to have more frequent and intensive dialogue with the parties on the protection of women and children, which constitute about 85 per cent of IDPs, and to ensure that vital lifesaving feeding programmes, including for schools, are not stopped.

We commend the efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to organize the Revitalization Forum and include all sides, for the effective implementation of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, and to prepare for the forthcoming democratic elections. We hope that the outcome of the Forum will lay the foundation necessary for the building of stable State institutions. Simultaneously, we need to ensure that the national dialogue launched in May is truly inclusive and transparent, for which the assistance of UNMISS and the Special Envoy will be needed. That will have to be reinforced by closer cooperation between the Transitional Government and IGAD. At the same time, a truly inclusive national dialogue has to be proceeded by a political process that creates the necessary security and political environment for such inclusion.

In conclusion, Kazakhstan fully supports the concerted efforts of the United Nations, the African Union and IGAD, and will work with the Council and key actors to find a lasting solution to the conflict in South Sudan, which should remain high on our list of priorities.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of South Sudan.

Mr. Malwal (South Sudan): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on assuming your duties as the President of the Security Council for this month. I assure you of our delegation's support and cooperation.

My delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General as requested by resolutions 2304 (2016) and 2327 (2016). I would like to make a few points, if you would allow me, Sir.

On humanitarian access, we have stated in the Council time and again that it is not, has not been and will never be the policy of the Government to hinder or impede access to any humanitarian organization. We understand the critical role they play in helping our people. Therefore, as a Government, we strive to see them succeed in reaching the populace — but we call for responsible reporting. What I think is lacking in that regard is an honest, open dialogue and understanding between the Government and the humanitarian agencies.

As stated by the Secretary-General in his report issued in May, His Excellency the President declared a unilateral ceasefire in the country and called on the army command to heed his call. However, it was not a blank check for the rebels to continue their attacks and provocations on the local population while the army stood aside and watched. Those provocations and hit-and-run attacks led to the hot pursuit that resulted in the eventual capture of Pagak — the headquarters of the rebels — by the South Sudan People's Defense Forces. Today Maiwut state is calmer than before, and life is returning to normal.

At this juncture, we would like to applaud the brotherly gesture of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, through the regional Government of Gambella, in the prompt holding of a security meeting with their counterparts in Maiwut state and in discouraging those who took refuge across the border from using it as a launching pad for attacks in South Sudan. We also applaud the President of the Gambella region for encouraging the South Sudanese refugees to return to their homes, after he had been assured of their safety and protection. We would like to take this opportunity again to call upon the Council to encourage the opposition leaders and their forces who crossed into Ethiopia and other neighbouring countries to embrace the spirit of peace and return home and joint the reconciliation process.

On the implementation of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, allow me to say that much has been undertaken by the Transitional Government of National Unity, including under its chapter V. Therefore, the upcoming revitalization process — according to our understanding — which is being led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), is merely intended to maintain the focus and momentum of the parties, rather than to renegotiate the Agreement; just as the national dialogue and Sudan People's Liberation Movement reunification process, which is being shepherded by His Excellency President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda, is a complementary initiative to consolidate and cement the success of the Peace Agreement.

Allow me to conclude with the question of the Regional Protection Force. As a Government, we agreed unreservedly to the deployment of the Force and to working closely with the United Nations, the African Union and IGAD in seeing the smooth implementation and operationalization of the mandate of those troops in South Sudan. The Government is still committed to that decision and to cooperating with the United

Nations Mission in South Sudan. However, the lack of consultation that we witnessed few days ago in Juba is something we hope will not be the norm, but rather the exception.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.